

S O C I A L I S T P A R T Y o f G R E A T B R I T A I N .

REPORT of the 34th Annual Conference held at
Peckham Pavilion on Friday, Saturday and Sunday
April 15th, 16th, and 17th. 1938.

PROCEEDINGS o f t h e F I R S T D A Y .

The conference was called to order by the General
Secretary at 11.20 a.m.

Election of Chairman. Groves.
Election of Vice Chairman. Higgs.
Election of Tellers. James, Bowley & Snellgrove.

Report of the Standing Orders Committee.

The Standing Orders Committee reported that there were
present 22 Delegates representing 10 Branches.

The Committee introduced a guide to the procedure of the
Conference, classifying the Agenda with a view to facilitating the
business. They also reported that there was a charge against a
member which was not on the Agenda, but it was to come before the
Conference, should a time be set aside to hear this, or should it
be left to the Standing Orders Committee.

RESOLUTION Butler and Baker.

"That the matter be left with the Standing
Orders Committee." Agreed.

RESOLUTION. Banks and Bredon.

"That the report be adopted." Agreed.

MAY DAY DEMONSTRATION.

S.W. London Delegates asked for urgency on the question of
May Day Demonstrations.

RESOLUTION. Reynolds and Coffin.

"That S.W. London Branch's request for urgency be
granted, and the business relating thereto, be
presented at 2.30 this afternoon." Cd. unan.

RESOLUTION. George and Fisher.

"That the first three items on the Standing Orders
Committee recommendation be dealt with." Agreed.

REPORT OF THE 34th EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

ELECTORAL ACTION. Arising from the resolution passed at the 1st
Annual Conference, Bloomsbury Branch enquired why no action had
been taken with regard to participating in Municipal elections
East Ham.

They were informed that this had not been done as there were
not enough members in the district to sign the nomination form.

UNIFORM BOOK-KEEPING. It was asked, could details of costs be
supplied to the Conference.

The Finance Committee stated that they had not yet gone into
the matter, but Comrade Collinson might be able to supply some in-
formation.

It was left in abeyance, pending Comrade Collinson's attendance.

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INTER-PARTY JOURNAL. The question was asked, what was being done about the Journal. It was stated that the publication of the Inter-Party Journal had been discontinued.

RETURN OF FORMS 'C'. Had the E.C. considered this matter since compiling this report?

It was being considered in the matter of Party Re-organisation.

FINANCE. It was pointed out that the cost of propaganda, after deducting the cost of Leeds Propaganda, was under £20. It was agreed that discussion on this would be brought up when considering the Propaganda Committee report.

BRANCHES. Regarding Glasgow Branch, it was asked what action was the E.C. taking to curb the expenditure of this Branch.

The General Secretary pointed out that by sympathisers, the Branch was very active. Owing to the lack of promised support, the plans undertaken for propaganda had not been successful, and as a result, funds had not yet been as anticipated, therefore they had had to ask the E.C. to foot the bill. The E.C. might carry on paying these bills if the Delegates recommended, otherwise the E.C. would probably have to refuse further financial help.

Hackney Branch. Several points were raised with regard to this Branch. The result was not satisfactory.

East and West Ham Branches. The question of a local headquarters was raised, but deferred to be dealt with when the Parliamentary Committee report was considered.

With regard to the amalgamation of East and West Ham Branches, the Delegate from West Ham Branch stated that this Branch had no desire to do this as they did not consider it in the best interests of the Party.

RESOLUTION. Cash and Ewbank.

"That this matter of the fusion of East and West Ham Branches be dealt with with the Parliamentary Committee's report." Cd. 18 - 0.

MEMBERSHIP. Hamilton Branch raised the question of the admission of members to Central Branch. It was considered that if by signing a Form "A" a person could become a member without any other preliminaries, such as contact with a branch or Party members, there was a possibility that such a person might be unsuitable as a member of the Party. The case was instanced of the Central member against whom a charge was being preferred during this Conference; this might have been obviated had some questionnaire been put to him.

Two suggestions were made:-

1. That all applicants for membership be invited to present themselves to the nearest branch.
2. That a committee be appointed to get out a questionnaire to be sent with Forms "A".

RESOLUTION. Fisher and Wood.

"That a questionnaire be drawn up for all prospective Central Branch members to fill in before their acceptance into Party membership becomes complete."

AMENDMENT. Tott & Fish.

"That as an alternative, Central Branch applicants should be requested to attend the nearest Branch to apply for membership when convenient." Cd. 22 - 2.

As sub. Res. Cd. 22-2.

Continued.

MEMBERSHIP. (Contd.)

The General Secretary stated that a special letter was sent out with every Form "A" asking the applicant to consider the implications of the D of P.

Item for Discussion, Dagenham & Romford Branch on Associate Membership.
It was agreed that this matter be deferred until Dagenham and Romford Branch Delegates were present.

PREMISES. The Premises Committee were asked what was the latest view with reference to obtaining new premises. As certain funds had been collected, we were more or less committed to get new premises.

Criticism was levelled at the failure to obtain new premises. It was stressed that we were under obligation to donors to obtain new premises as early as possible.

It was stated on behalf of the Premises Committee that they were fully aware of our obligations in this direction. The difficulty was that the rental of accommodation required by the Party was generally too high for the Party's expenditure.

The Committee are continually on the alert in looking for premises suitable to the needs and income of the Party.

The Conference adjourned for lunch at 1.p.m. and resumed at 2.10. p.m.

Premises. (Contd.)

The Lewisham Branch stated that they were making enquiries during the next week for premises at the Elephant and Castle which might be suitable as a new Head Office.

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT.

No action.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE.

As the Bazaar had been such a success, it was suggested that we endeavour to hold another this year. It was also considered that the social aspect of Party activity should be pursued more than it was. We tended to consider only the financial aspect when running dances etc.

RESOLUTION. Ayres and Kauffman.(Stepney)

"That this Conference recommends that more attention be given to social activity."
Cd. 15 - 5.

MAY DAY DEMONSTRATION.

This matter, raised under urgency by S.W. London Branch, was then considered as agreed at 2.30 p.m.

Long discussion on this matter ensued, the following points, for and against being raised.

The E.C. were criticised for their action in agreeing to a Party contingent participating in the May Day demonstration.

If the Party took part as proposed in the demonstration, it would be very near to violating the Declaration of Principles. We should be allied by implication with all kinds of so called socialists. The matter had been flung upon the Party by the E.C. without giving branches and members an opportunity to discuss the matter. It would be a different matter if Party

May Day Demonstration (Contd.)

members congregated at Hyde Park on May 1st and held meetings, but they need not take part in the demonstration.

A RESOLUTION was then tabled by S.W.London Branch.

RESOLUTION. Banks and Devine.

"That this Conference instructs the E.C. to take a Poll of the Party on the question 'Shall the Party take part in any demonstration of the May Day Type?' and urges that the project is dropped pending the decision of the Party."

The E.C. should initiate new moves. It was the representative body of the Party and its action in this matter was in order.

It was pointed out in defence that no evidence had been adduced to show that the proposition was contrary to the Declaration of Principles or against the Policy of the Party. This should have been done if it existed. There was no chance of confusion, the Party would take part in the May Day demonstration as a unit. The identity would be contrasted with other organisations attending. Our banners would emphasise distinction between us and others.

The E.C. was not acting unconstitutionally in altering the tradition of the Party. They were not altering the Policy.

The S.P.G.B. must become known to the workers, it was distressing that it was so little known. We should take every opportunity offered, to take advantage of working-class movements, and one such as presented by the May Day Demonstration should not be missed, if only from the point of advertisement. We could well use this occasion to unravel the confusion which is rife as to our position in regard to other political organisations.

If the demonstration was organised by a political party there might be some reason for this objection, but this was a workers day. Our task in the past has been explaining our non-participation in May Day Demonstrations. Our speakers would not say anything different from the usual propaganda speeches. As we are in opposition to other parties, it is our job to be there explaining our position.

It was surprising that such an alarmist attitude should be taken on such a simple matter. It was time we departed from old traditions; it shows that we have been only too lethargic in the past.

If members fully understand the Principles of the Party, there is no possibility of them slipping on the slippery slopes such as suggested if we took this step. We have been assured that the demonstration is essentially Trade Unionist in character.

Points raised in opposition were as follows:-

Are we going to march behind banners of people who have betrayed the working-class? We must maintain a clear position. Maintain an attitude of isolation. We have ridiculed the idea of participation in the past. Party membership should have been consulted. There was a possibility of 'making confusion worse confounded'. It was in the interests of the Party that the matter should be dropped. It was a departure from Policy. The main theme of this year's demonstration would be Anti-Fascism. May Day was partly a safety-valve which assists capitalists. Can outside people see the demarcation between our Principles and the reformist programmes.

The RESOLUTION was then voted upon and Carried 18 - 17.

MEETING of first day was then adjourned at 6.p.m.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SECOND DAY.

The Conference was called to order at 11.50.a.m.
Chairman. Waters.
Vice Chairman. Snellgrove.
Tellers. Mallo and Bowley.

Owing to the small amount of business transacted on the first day, the Standing Orders Committee drew up and presented a revised order of business for the second and third days.

The Conference decided to deal with small items on the Agenda in order to leave time for consideration of the item, The Task confronting the Party.

It was therefore agreed to consider to-day, the following items:- Propaganda, Publicity, Classes, E.C. Rulings, etc., etc.

RESOLUTION. Banks and Cash.

"That the report of the Standing Orders Committee be adopted and the suggestions approved." Agreed.

RESOLUTION. Gregory and Maertons.

"That E.C. Rulings be deferred until to-morrow." Cd. 8 - 0.

It was noted that Comrade Terry was a delegate for Leyton Branch was without credentials. It was agreed that he be seated and that his credentials be forwarded to Head Office by his Branch.

PROPAGANDA.

Several points were raised with regard to this report.

The small amount of expenditure (after deduction of the amount spent in Leeds)

Divergence of opinion of members on various points dealt with in general propaganda. Chiswick delegates stressed the urgency for a class to train speakers. A short course on speaking, economics etc. Three items for discussion Numbers 9,10. and 11 on page 19 engaged the attention of the Conference as pertaining to the matter under discussion.

RESOLUTION. Davine and Banks.

"That the three items for discussion, 9,10, and 11 be left until the Task Confronting the Party was dealt with." Cd. 21 - 0.

Provincial.

Leeds. Questioned whether, owing to poor support, was the propaganda in Leeds worth while --- could the money spent in this direction be spent more advantageously elsewhere. Could Com. Davis' efforts be diverted from Leeds to other provincial towns (or London) where conditions were more favourable.

URGENCY was asked for the item, 'The Task Confronting the Party'. It was pointed out that as it was such an important item, time should be set aside for dealing with this.

RESOLUTION. Otway and Connolly.

"That the matter of the Task Confronting the Party be dealt with after lunch, immediately after the Leeds Propaganda item had been concluded." Cd. 17 - 6.

Conference adjourned for lunch at 1.10 p.m.

Resumed at 2.20.p.m.

Leeds Propaganda (Contd.)

RESOLUTION. M. Otway and L. Otway. (Southend.)

"That the question of Comrade Davis's activities in Leeds be referred to the E.C. and that they appoint a special committee in conjunction with Comrade Davis, to thoroughly review the best methods of using Comrade Davis' activities."

AMENDMENT. Thurlow and Bredon.

"That the words 'E.C. and they appoint a special' be deleted and the word 'Propaganda' be inserted."

Cd. 12 - 7.

As Sub Res. Cd. 20 - 0.

THE TASK CONFRONTING THE PARTY.

This item for discussion was opened on behalf of the E.C.

A short history was given of events which led to it being placed on the Agenda in the E.C.'s name.

1. Bloomsbury Branch had brought the question before the last Conference under its present title. Considerable discussion had taken place.
2. The implications were so far reaching, that the item had engaged the attention of the E.C. during 1937, and the E.C. of 1938 had gone further with the points raised.
3. They had sought the assistance of their sub-committees and a general meeting of sub-committees would be called to consider the whole question and report to the E.C.

The item, 'The Task Confronting the Party' was of immense importance and intense interest, because active membership of the Party generally were not satisfied with the progress the Party was making. While all members agreed upon the fundamental principles of the Party, there was a divergence of opinion upon what could be termed, the policy of the Party, which should not be confused in any way with the Principles and Object.

There was for instance, a division of opinion on, for example,
The admission of members. The lapsing of members.
A large or small Party. Methods of propaganda,
Literature etc.

Which all arose from not having a definite line of action to work to, or in other words, a policy or an immediate object to work for.

If the discussion on the Task confronting the Party could hammer out such a policy or immediate object which would cover the next 5 or 10 years, then the Party organisation could be lined up to the object or policy and every step in the Party activity should be a step toward the Object.

Many points of view were expressed by delegates taking part in discussion. Party speakers stated that there was an idea prevalent among workers that the Party was anti-Trade Union. This must be got rid of. The Trade Union Organisation could be, and must be made a propaganda centre for the Party. We did not make headway, or gain sympathy because our speakers give evasive answers to important working-class questions which led workers to believe we were opposed to working-class movements. This must be changed.

Propagandists should receive technical training, there should be a system for giving precise and reliable information of topical questions as well as theoretical. The Party should clearly state its attitude on all important questions and speakers should answer questions in accord therewith.

The need for greater publicity was stressed, our activities should be such as to command the attention of the National press, thus we become news value. The Party had to face a boycott of silence. We were largely responsible, we should make ourselves more widely known. We should make contacts whenever and wherever opportunity afforded. There was a need for more Provincial branches. Branches and members should have definite jobs to do.

A case for introspection was stated by one Comrade, who thought that the Party must examine itself for the reasons for its unsatisfactory progress, and urged the need for complete re-organisation.

The discussion was carried over to the third day and much of the ground was again gone over, but very little progress was made.

There was a general expression of opinion that the Task Confronting the Party should now be discussed by all Branches and the E.C. should continue the work it had started with the assistance of its Committees.

The following Resolutions were passed during discussion:-

Second Day.

RESOLUTION -- Devereux & George (Bloomsbury)

"That in the opinion of this Conference, the immediate task of the Party is to explore every avenue through which we may utilise opportunities afforded by workers movements."
Cd. 19 - 5.

RESOLUTION -- M. Otway and L. Otway.

"That this Conference recommends to the E.C. that classes be commenced to increase the knowledge of Party members with a view to increasing the number of Party speakers and writers."
Cd. 21 - 0.

RESOLUTION. -- Cash and Coffin.

"That this Conference recommends the E.C. to prepare machinery whereby members may be brought together in their respective Trade Unions for the purpose of thrashing out concrete proposals for advancing the Party interest."

AMENDMENT. -- Maertons and Banks.

"This Conference urges the E.C. to instruct branches to compile a list of Trade Unionists for the purpose of directing and co-ordinating the activities of such members."

Cd. 19 - 2.

As Sub Res. Cd. 20. - 0.

PROCEEDINGS of the THIRD DAY.

The Conference was called to order at 11.30.

Chairman --- Groves.

Vice " --- Waters.

Tellers. Allon, Bowley and Snellgrove.

The Task Confronting the Party. (Contd.)

RESOLUTION. Tett and Fisher.

"That this Conference requests the E.C. to set up immediately a special May Day Committee to organise Party activity in connection with the forthcoming May Day Demonstration, and recommends:-

1. That one or more platform (perhaps one or more coal carts could be hired) be erected in Hyde Park and decorated with Party banners.
2. That a special leaflet be prepared and widely distributed at the demonstration.
3. That arrangements be made to co-ordinate sales of literature along the route of the demonstration and outside Hyde Park."

Cd. 17 - 0.

RESOLUTION. Kilner and Foster.

"That this Conference moves that the E.C. be urged to convene a meeting of representatives of Working-class organisations with the object of putting the case of the S.P.G.B. on the question of War and the working-class."

Lost 2 - 18.

AMENDMENT. Ewbanks and Devine.

"That the E.C. be advised to circularise all branches of Trade Unions inviting them to send representatives to a meeting convened by the S.P.G.B. to discuss war and the working-class."

Lost 6 - 17.

Several resolutions were submitted which were ruled out on the grounds that they conflicted with Party Principle.

For example:-

"That this Conference recommends the E.C. to call a Conference of Trade Union and other working class organisations with a view to thrashing out a working-class Policy against War."

These were ruled out by the Chairman.

RESOLUTION -- Otway and Goldberg.

"That the Chairman leave the Chair."

Lost 8 - 12.

RESOLUTION Maertons and Evans,

"That under the heading to task confronting the Party, this Conference proceeds to discuss methods of gaining contact with members of other working-class organisations."

AMENDMENT Cash & Coffin.

That this conference recommends the E.C. to call a meeting of Party members to discuss ways and means etc."

Amendment lost 16 - 3.

Res then Cd. 18 - 4.

AMENDMENTS TO RULES.

Rule 2.	Tottenham and Wood Green.	Amendment.	Lost 6 - 20.
Rule 12.	Bloomsbury	"	" 10 - 18.
Rule 13.	"	"	" 6 - 17.
Rule 27.	"	"	Cd. 12 - 11.

Dagenham and Romford Branch.

1. "That the E.C. be instructed to issue a statement defining the position of Party members serving on Trades Councils as representatives of their Trade Unions in view of the fact that Trades Councils are usually wings of the Labour Party." Cd. 22- 0.
2. That a committee be appointed to enquire into the ways and means of establishing a Socialist press to be a publishing house in the form of a limited liability Company." Lost 6 - 19.

Three other Resolutions re Task Confronting the Party.

RESOLUTION Devine and Banks.

"That further discussion on the Task Confronting the Party be adjourned until the E.C., after considering the proposals, have formulated a line of action to be submitted to a future Party meeting." Lost 11 - 14.

RESOLUTION Rubin and Kaufman.

"That this Conference holds that the future progress of the Party is bound up with a re-examination of the conditions of membership and a re-consideration of the Party's approach to a current events." Cd. 16 - 0.

RESOLUTION Devine and Banks.

"That the E.C. be requested to outline a line of action based upon the views of the Conference and submit it to a Party meeting to be called as soon as possible." Cd. 22-2

RESUMED CONFERENCE.

RESOLUTION Tharlow and Bredon.

"That the E.C. be instructed to make arrangements for Saturday afternoon May 7th and all day Sunday May 8th for the resumption of Conference."

AMENDMENT Devereux & Otway.

"That the E.C. be instructed to obtain a hall on the first Sunday available for the resumption of the Conference." Cd. 21 - 2.

As sub Res. Cd. unan.

CHARGE AGAINST GORDON. (Central Branch.

The charge against this Comrade was read.

RESOLUTION -- Tharlow and Devereux.

"That the General Secretary be instructed to get into touch with the Glasgow Branch with a view to a member interviewing the Comrade and asking for an explanation." Cd. 20 - 6.

RESOLUTION Devine and Bredon.

"That the Conference be adjourned, to be resumed on a date fixed by the E.C." Agreed.

Conference adjourned at 6. p.m.

Report of the Resumed 34th Annual Conference held at
Friars Hall, Blackfriars Road on Sunday June 19th 1938.

Chairman. Reynolds.

Vice Chairman. Waters.

Tellers. Anderson, Allen and Wright.

Report of Standing Orders Committee.

The Committee reported that 31 delegates were present representing 15 branches. Two delegates were without credentials.

Resolution -- Gregory and Cash.

"That the Standing Orders Committee's report be adopted and the two delegates sit without credentials." Agd.

Foreign Secretary's Report.

Resolution -- Goldberg and Field.

"That the report be adopted."

Cd. 25 - 0.

May Day Demonstrations.

Chiswick Branch asked for urgency on this question. A resolution was submitted asking the Conference to call for the resignation of certain E.C. members owing to their conduct as reported on the 10th. E.C. report. The Chairman ruled this out of order, as it was a criticism of the 35th. E.C. and this Conference was dealing with the work of the 34th. E.C.

The Manchester delegates also requested urgency on a similar matter. This too was ruled out on the same grounds.

The Task Confronting the Party.

The question was raised as to whether this item should be discussed.

Resolution -- Fisher and Hayden.

"That the question of the Task confronting the Party be deferred until 'other business.'" Cd. 22-0.

Parliamentary Committee's Report.

This report was before the meeting and much discussion ensued until the meeting adjourned for lunch at 1.p.m.

Meeting was resumed at 2.10p.m.

Parliamentary Committee's Report Contd.

Resolution -- Rubin and Kaufmann. (Stepney).

"That Stepney Branch is of the opinion that if an election takes place within six months from now the Party should not contest the election." Lost 2 - 18.

Central Organiser's Report.

No action.

Economics Class.

No action.

Party Votes.

No action.

Propaganda.

This item had been partially considered at the Easter Conference. After further consideration no further action was taken.

Report of the Resumed Conference (1938) Continued.

E.C. Rulings.

Handbills.

Resolution -- Waters and Gratton (Dagenham & Romford)

"That the words 'including handbills' be deleted from the E.C Ruling relating to the Party 'Object' on all Party publications." Cd. 22 - 4.

Trade Union Political Levy.

West Ham Branch Item for discussion.

Resolution -- Wiltshire and Gregory.

"That this Conference instructs the E.C to take a Poll of the Party on the following item:-

"That the 34th E.C. Ruling that it is not permissible for a member to participate in payment of the Political Fund of a Trade Union until such times as these Funds be allocated to the S.P.G.B." be rescinded." Cd. 15 - 12.

Publications.

Bloomsbury Branch's Item for Discussion.

Resolution -- George and Doveaux.

"That in view of the unsatisfactory and extremely serious situation regarding the production of Party literature, this Conference recommends the E.C. to authorise at least one member of the Editorial Committee to give full time to research, preparation of "S.S." and pamphlets etc., and that he should receive remuneration for doing so." Lost 4 - 15.

Resolution -- Ewbank and Hayden. (S.W. London.)

"That this Conference recommends the E.C. to appoint a committee other than the Editorial Committee to continue the work of revising No. 11. pamphlet." Cd. 10 - 7.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION.

S.W. London Branch. "Shall the last word in the Party 'Object' be changed to 'Society'?" No Action.

Dagenham and Romford Branch.

"The possibility of finding a way to dispel the confusion arising from the use of the word 'Socialism' by reformist organisations." No Action.

Lewisham Branch. "The relationship between the Executive Committee and the Party Officers."

Resolution -- Fisher and Wood. (Lewisham)

"That this Conference holds that it is inexpedient for officers of the Party to be members of the Executive Committee." Lost 6 - 18.

OTHER BUSINESS.

The Task Confronting the Party.

Under this heading the Manchester Branch raised the question of the Inter-Party Journal and moved the following motion.

Resolution -- Maertons and King. (Manchester.)

"That in view of the Conflict within the Party on certain matters, the E.C. be instructed to see that re-publication of the Inter-Party Journal is commenced, for the purpose of securing the widest possible discussion of the differences in question." Cd. 24 - 3.

CONFERENCE ADJOURNED 7.45. p.m.

Report of the Annual Conference (33th) held at the Peckham Pavilion, Peckham Road, London, S.E. on April 7th, 8th & 9th, 1939.
~~CONFIDENTIAL - NOT TO BE DISCLOSED TO THE PUBLIC OR TO ANY OTHER PERSON~~

The Conference was called to order at 11.40 a.m.

Chairman. Ambridge.

Vice Chairman. Waters.

Tellers. Lako, Farmer & Snellgrove.

Report of the Standing Orders Committee.

The Standing Orders Committee reported that there were 22 delegates representing 12 branches. Stepney Branch had not sent in their Form "C" until after the required date. It was agreed that the delegates be allowed to sit. Delegates from Hackney and Lewisham had no credentials. It was agreed that these delegates be allowed to sit.

It was agreed that the report of the Committee be adopted.

Report of the 35th Executive Committee.

May Day Demonstrations. A question was raised as to why the wording of the resolution on this matter had been altered with regard to the Party poll. The O.S. reported that the E.C. re-worded the question in the interests of the Party. No action was taken.

Task Confronting the Party. It was agreed that consideration of this item be deferred until 2 p.m.

Membership. It was reported that the membership of the Party was 650. No action.

Central Branch. No action.

In regard to the resignation through ill-health of the Central Branch Secretary, the following resolution was passed.

Resolution, George & Hardy. "That this Conference places on record its appreciation of Comrade Collinson's work as Central Branch Secretary". Cd. nem con.

Central Organiser's Report. No action.

Otway Rejected Motion.

Resolution, George & Wright, (Blenbury). "That Comrade Otway's letter of explanation, referred to in the report be read to the meeting". Agreed.

After some discussion Comrades Allen & Wiltshire (Islington) tabled a motion.

1 p.m. Meeting adjourned for lunch.

2.15 p.m. Meeting resumed.

Standing Orders Committee reported that there were 36 delegates representing 13 branches. It was agreed that the report be adopted.

Task Confronting the Party. (Deferred Matter).

Resolution, Walker & Dawe (Lewisham) "That the item task confronting the Party be deferred indefinitely".
Lost 6-11.

Report of the 35th Annual Conference. (Sheet 2.).

Resolution. Maertens & Bowley. "That the matter be deferred until we have completed the item under discussion at 1.p.m." Cd. 24 - 0.

E.C. Ruling on T.U. Political Levy. No action.

Outway Rejected Motion. (Deferred Matter). The motion from Islington was again before the meeting.

Resolution. Allen & Wiltshire. "That this Conference requests the E.C. to provide facilities for the discussion of vital working class issues, on the widest democratic basis, minorities having the right to the fullest opportunity and freedom of voice in expressing its opinion, without receiving threats of disciplinary action being taken. The purpose being to have an official Party pronouncement upon these issues."

Amendment. George & Hardy. "That this Conference is of the opinion that there is no need for a resolution for free discussion within the Party, as ample opportunity already exists."

The Chairman accepted this amendment although it was challenged as a negative.

Resolution. Weinberg & Allen. "That the Chairman leave the Chair".
Lost 12-15.

The Amendment was then carried. 22-9.
As sub.res. carried. 23-8.

Amendment. Bowley & Dawe. "That the E.C. be recommended to set up a Committee for the purpose of examining methods of discussing controversial matters".
Lost 9-20.

Amendment. Curtis & Chalkley. "That in the opinion of the Conference the Party must maintain discipline within the framework of the Party rules and the 'D. of P.' and we cannot surrender the right of making members answerable for their actions and statements. Nevertheless no subject shall be out of order for discussion until the Party has registered a decision on the matter". Lost 5-22

Resolution. Weinberg & Maertens. "Next business". Cd. 15-12.

Charge Against a Member. Discussion was opened on the matter of the charge brought against Comrade Reynolds (which was later withdrawn) regarding the Party's policy on War. It was agreed that this item be deferred until the next day, to be followed by the T.U. Political Levy question.

Conference Adjourned 1st Day at 6.p.m.
Second Day of Conference. Time commenced 11.40.a.m.

Chairman. Waters.

Vice Chairman. Isbitsky.

Tellers. Galler & Fisher.

Standing Orders Committee reported that there were 24 delegates present representing 10 branches.

It was agreed that the report be adopted.
It was agreed to take the Editorial Committee report at this stage.

Report of the 35th Annual Conference (Sheet 3).

Editorial Committee. It was further agreed to include in discussion the item from Lewisham Branch .. "A weekly Socialist Standard" which was among the 'items for discussion'.

Resolution. Walker & Dawe. "That the EC be recommended to appoint a sub committee to consider the possibility of publishing a weekly or fortnightly "S.S." Lost 8-9.

Resolution. Maertens & Weidberg. "That this Conference urges the E.C. to consider immediately the possibility of publishing a "Penny Socialist Standard". Cd. unan.

Resolution. Mayes & Bowley. "That the E.C. be recommended to continue with the coloured cover of the "S.S." for a period of twelve months". Cd. 13-5.

Resolution. Barnie & Coffin. "That the coloured cover not be numbered. Lost 2+10.

Parties Abroad. A cable-gram from the Boston local was read to the Conference. It was agreed that the following messages of greeting should be sent to our sister parties abroad.

"We the delegates of the 35th Annual Conference of the S.P.G.B. send our fraternally Socialist greetings to companion Parties in Australia, New Zealand, Canada & U.S.A. and express our whole hearted appreciation of the steadfast work for Socialism in these difficult days, and pledge ourselves to continue the common fight for the overthrow of capitalist domination and the inauguration of Socialism."

"That in the present situation of world affairs in which the sectional interests of capitalists are bringing nations to the verge of another catastrophic war, this Conference of the S.P.G.B. reiterates its unfaltering adhesion to the cause of Socialism and pledges itself to carry on the work of freeing the workers from wage slavery".

Charge Against a Member. The item dealing with Comrade Reynolds' suspension and the withdrawal of the charge against him, was now before the Conference.

Resolution. Maertens & Weidberg. "That this Conference censured the last E.C. in that they first warned Comrade Reynolds not to repeat a certain statement and that upon him then doing this in public, they did not discipline him". Carried 8-4.

Resolution. Offord & Walker. "Next business". Cd. 13-11.

T.U. Political Levy.

Resolution. Maertens & Weidberg. "That this Conference censures the last E.C. in that they dealt with a complaint by the Manchester Branch against a certain statement by Comrade Reynolds on the matter of the T.U. Political Levy in a most unsatisfactory manner." Cd. 8-4.

Conference Adjourned at 6.p.m.

3rd Day of Conference. Commenced at 11.30.a.m.

Chairman. Ambridge.

Vice Chairman. Waters.

Tellers. MacDonald & Snellgrove.

Report of the 35th Annual Conference, (Sheet 4).

It was agreed that the item - Amendments to rules be taken first item after lunch.

Resignation of Six E.C. Members.

Resolution. Higgins & McPhail. "That this Conference upholds the view that the S.P.C.B. has a policy on War and records its regret that the 35th E.C. should have rescinded a resolution of October 4th. "We urge that the present E.C. take immediate steps to re-establish this ruling, and that failure to comply by any members be dealt with sternly"

Amendment. George & Wright. "That while in the view of some members it is misleading to describe the Party's position on War as a policy, this Conference is of the opinion that to describe it otherwise would be misleading to the majority of workers.

Deferring motion. "That further consideration of the matter be deferred. Lost. 2-22.

Resolution. Curtis & Walker. "That the vote be taken". Cd. 13-8.

The Amendment was then voted upon and lost 9-18.

Amendment. Walker & Dawe. "That this Conference is of the opinion that Party propaganda can be best facilitated by the view :- that propagandists are allowed to state that although a policy strictly means a line of action taken by the Party sharing or controlling the political machinery. This does not prevent the S.P. from attacking the Capitalist system from all angles in an effect manner".

Resolution. Higgins & George. "That the vote be taken" Cd. 21-2.

The amendment was then voted upon and lost 4-18.
The resolution was carried 15-10.

Parliamentary Committee.

Resolution. Butler & Thurlow. "That this Conference recommends the E.C. to call a Party meeting to consider the question of the Parliamentary campaign. Cd. 23-0.

Publicity Committee.

Resolution. Chalkley & Gray. "That the E.C. be urged to reprint the pamphlet "Socialism & Religion" as soon as possible". Carried 20-5

Amendments to Rules.

Rule 25. (Dagenham & Romford Branch).

"Delete all after line six and insert 'A Party Poll shall be interpreted to mean that every Party member shall receive a separate ballot paper and vote individually, i.e., as in a method adopted for the election of Party Officers.' Insert also at the end ('N.B.:- For Party Poll on Executive Committee and Party Officers vacancies, see Rule 12')" Cd. 27-8.

Resolutions.

Lewisham Branch. No. 1. No motion shall be entertained by the Conference which does not appear on the Final Agenda. This does not apply to methods of procedure". This resolution was ruled out of order.

No. 2. Lost 5-23.

Report of the 35th Annual Conference. (Concluded).

Foreign Secretary's Report.

Wright & Coffin. "That further consideration of the Foreign Secretary's Report be deferred until ~~xxxx~~ the Delegate meeting. Agreed.

Resolution. Maertens & Higgins.

"That consideration of the remainder of the Agenda, with the exception of 'items for discussion' be referred to the Delegate Meeting. Agreed.

Items for Discussion.

Chiswick Branch. "The desirability of applicants for membership undergoing a probationary period before ~~xxxxxxx~~ being accepted into full Party membership".

Resolution. Curtis & Wright.

"That this Conference views the suggestion with favour and recommends the E.C. to consider the question". Cd. 13-8.

Resolution. Bowley & Wright.

"That the report of the 35th E.C. be adopted".
Carried. 19-0.

(Signed). F.C. ADAMS. General Secretary.
for and on behalf of
the 36th Executive Committee. S.P.G.B.